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Understanding by Design

4-2-2009

Personal and Group Identity [9th grade]

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Understanding By Design

Unit Title: Personal and Group Identity

Grade Level: 9th

Subject/Topic Area (s): Starting the year, goal setting, personal identity, collaboration

Designed By: Alice Rasmussen

Time Frame: 2-3 weeks

School District: North East ISD

School: Robert E. Lee High School

School Address and Phone: 1400 Jackson Keller,
San Antonio, TX 78213
210-442-0300

Brief Summary of Unit

This unit is designed to purposefully set the tone of the classroom at the beginning of the year. As the year begins, I often get sidetracked with the business of starting a school year and the important process of orienting with the classroom, the teacher, and each other gets pushed aside. This unit is designed with the flexibility needed to allow for the business and logistics of the beginning of the year. It is also designed to allow for schedule changes. A student who enters the classroom after the first day will not be lost or behind. The unit is cohesive, but flexible and provides a plan for bringing students together and setting the tone for the year. The overarching goal for the unit is for students to get to know one another and to discover what their role in the classroom is for the year. The unit incorporates reading, writing, and communicating in order to determine students' knowledge and skill levels.

Unit: Personal and Group Identity
Grade: 9th grade (English I Pre-AP)

Stage 1: Desired Results

Understandings

Students will understand that...

- The human experience is a shared one; we grow and learn by collaborating with and learning from others.
- Without our individuality, there would be nothing to learn from one another.
- Writers provide insights about human experience and individuality.
- Our classroom is a place of individual dedication and success as well as a place to collaborate and learn from one another.

Essential Questions

- What do I know about myself? What am I still discovering?
- What can I share with others? What can I learn from other people?
- How can an individual make a difference?
- What is the individual's role in a group?
- What goals do I have for myself in this class, and what steps will I take to reach those goals? How will I involve others in helping me to reach these goals?

Knowledge & Skills (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills - TEKS)

(1) Writing/purposes. The student writes in a variety of forms, including business, personal, literary, and persuasive texts, for various audiences and purposes. The student is expected to:

- (A) write in a variety of forms using effective word choice, structure, and sentence forms with emphasis on organizing logical arguments with clearly related definitions, theses, and evidence; write persuasively; write to report and describe; and write poems, plays, and stories;
- (B) write in a voice and style appropriate to audience and purpose; and
- (C) organize ideas in writing to ensure coherence, logical progression, and support for ideas.

(2) Writing/writing processes. The student uses recursive writing processes when appropriate. The student is expected to:

- (A) use prewriting strategies to generate ideas, develop voice, and plan;
- (B) develop drafts, alone and collaboratively, by organizing and reorganizing content and by refining style to suit occasion, audience, and purpose;
- (C) proofread writing for appropriateness of organization, content, style, and conventions.

(4) Writing/inquiry/research. The student uses writing as a tool for learning. The student is expected to:

- (A) use writing to formulate questions, refine topics, and clarify ideas;
- (B) use writing to discover, organize, and support what is known and what needs to be learned about a topic;
- (D) represent information in a variety of ways such as graphics, conceptual maps, and learning logs;
- (F) compile written ideas and representations into reports, summaries, or other formats and draw conclusions.

(7) Reading/comprehension. The student comprehends selections using a variety of strategies. The student is expected to:

- (A) establish a purpose for reading such as to discover, interpret, and enjoy;
- (B) draw upon his/her own background to provide connection to texts;
- (C) monitor reading strategies and modify them when understanding breaks down such as rereading, using resources, and questioning;
- (F) identify main ideas and their supporting details;
- (G) summarize texts;
- (H) draw inferences such as conclusions, generalizations, and predictions and support them from text;
- (J) read silently with comprehension for a sustained period of time.

(8) Reading/variety of texts. The student reads extensively and intensively for different purposes in varied sources, including world literature. The student is expected to:

- (A) read to be entertained, to appreciate a writer's craft, to be informed, to take action, and to discover models to use in his/her own writing;
- (B) read in such varied sources as diaries, journals, textbooks, maps, newspapers, letters, speeches, memoranda, electronic texts, and other media.

(10) Reading/literary response. The student expresses and supports responses to various types of texts. The student

is expected to:

- (A) respond to informational and aesthetic elements in texts such as discussions, journals, oral interpretations, and dramatizations;
 - (B) use elements of text to defend his/her own responses and interpretations.
- (12) Reading/analysis/evaluation. The student reads critically to evaluate texts. The student is expected to:
- (A) analyze characteristics of text, including its structure, word choices, and intended audience.
- (14) Listening/speaking/critical listening. The student listens attentively for a variety of purposes. The student is expected to:
- (A) focus attention on the speaker's message;
 - (B) use knowledge of language and develop vocabulary to interpret accurately the speaker's message;
 - (C) monitor speaker's message for clarity and understanding such as asking relevant questions to clarify understanding; and
 - (D) formulate and provide effective verbal and nonverbal feedback.

Stage 2: Assessment Evidence

Performance Task:

1. Individual assessment and reflection: Compile a portfolio of your assignments and reflections from this unit. Review them and complete the following:

- From the Creations List, pick something to create that introduces and expresses yourself to someone you have never met. Your creation should incorporate the following information: personal facts (home, family, age, interests, other “introductory information”), learning style information, and goals (for this year, for life). Make your project personal; make it you. In addition to your creation, include a written statement which justifies and explains your project. How does it reveal the above information about you? (length - approx. 1 page)

2. Group collaborative activity: In your assigned group, write an essay together on one of the following topics:

- Consider the causes of a problem that can arise in a familiar setting and its solution. The problem might occur at school, home, work, a sports event, between friends, or another situation. In your essay, be sure to discuss the problem, the causes of the problem, the best solution, and the steps needed to reach that solution. Be specific!
- Compare two approaches to the same goal. Some examples might be studying or cramming for a test, making a spontaneous or a thoughtful decision, planning fun or being spontaneous, or your own idea. Be sure to explain the two choices and discuss the pros and cons of each. You do not need to reach a decision on which one is better, but you do need to explain the positives and negatives to both sides.

You will turn in your essay as well as any prewriting and brainstorming that you do. Also, when you are finished with your group essay, individually complete a reflection sheet about your group process.

****Note** – remember that there are two sides to your grade: one part of it is the essay itself, the other part is how well you work together as a group. See the rubric for specific criteria.

Other evidence:

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| • Check-ins | • Exit Slips |
| • Freewrites | • Timed Write |
| • Mimic-writes | • Think-Pair-Share |
| • Reading comprehension, analysis, response | • Reflections |
| • Collaborative co-op activities | |

Stage 3: Learning Activities

Day 1: What do I know about myself? What am I still discovering? What can I share with others? What can I learn from other people?

- Welcome to English I Pre-AP (info sheets, etc.)
- Desk Nametags
 - Warm-up question and introduction: “What is a movie title that describes your summer experience and why?”
- Self-banner
 - Stand-up, sit-down to share
- Portrait poem <http://www.tnellen.com/cybereng/portrait.html>
 - Read examples – characterize writers
 - Choose a version to write own portrait poem

Day 2: What do I know about myself? What am I still discovering? What can I share with others? What can I learn from other people?

- Desk Nametags
 - Warm-up question and introduction: “What would the title of your autobiography be and why?” (Show examples from politicians, celebrities, etc.)
- *I am who I am freewriting*
 - Volunteers to share, turn in
- Read “My Name” by Sandra Cisneros
- Discussion – facts and inferences
- “My Name” mimic-writing

Day 3: How can an individual make a difference?

- Desk Nametags
 - Warm-up question and introduction: “What would your favorite 8th grade teacher say about you in a letter to me. Why would they say those things?”
- Introduce EQ – brainstorm situations in which one person has made a difference (present, past, personal) Think-Pair-Share
- Reading: “Stop Ordering Me Around” by Stacey Wilkins p. 120 (from *Short Takes: Model Essays for Composition*, edited by Elizabeth Penfield. 9th edition)
 - *Organization and Ideas* #s 3, 4
 - *Technique and Style* #s 2
 - *Journal* – choice #1 or #2
- *Timed Write (30 minutes)* In a well-organized essay, discuss how you think Ms. Wilkins could individually make a difference in her situation at the restaurant. Do not dwell on what has already happened and cannot be changed; rather, write about how she could handle this or similar situations in the future. Finally, do you think Ms. Wilkins could make a difference in this situation for other servers? If so, how? If not, why?
- *Exit Slip* – how does today’s EQ relate to your life? What difference can you make as an individual? How does making a difference as an individual relate to the classroom?

Day 4: (group think goes bad) What is an individual’s role in a group?

- Desk Nametags
 - Warm-up question and introduction: Guns and Roses – students share one low/one high

- An individual had the chance to make a difference, but didn't - "Tiffany Stephenson – An Apology" by Bjorn Skogquist p.239 (from *Short Takes: Model Essays for Composition*, edited by Elizabeth Penfield. 9th edition)
 - *Organization and Ideas* #s 3, 5
 - *Technique and Style* #s 2, 3, 4, 5
 - *Journal – choice #1 or #2*
 - *HW – Essay #2*
- Class discussion: How does this apply to our EQ for the day? What was Skogquist's role in his 4th grade group?
 - Brainstorm positive/negative group situations
 - Brainstorm possible individual roles within a group
- *Exit Slip: Today I learned... I want to know more about... Question(s) I have...*

Day 5: (group think goes well) **What is an individual's role in a group?**

- Desk Nametags
 - Warm-up question and introduction: Postcards – have students pick an image that appeals to them and explain why.
- Co-op: Blind Polygon, Broken Squares (www.nsrharmony.org), "Blind" drawing
- Review EQ – what was our lesson last class about how the individual (Skogquist) interacted with his group? Also review any insights or questions from exit slips.
- Reading: Armstrong, Joseph L. "Seven Keys for Small Group Success." Adult Learning 15 (01 Jan. 2004): 34. ERIC. EBSCO. Trinity University Coates Library, San Antonio, TX.
- *Homework – Briefly summarize each of the seven keys for small group success, then answer the following questions:*
 1. *How could your group processes today have been improved by implementing any of the steps outlined in this article? Explain which steps would have helped and why.*
 2. *Which of the steps do you agree with and why? Which of the steps do you have questions or concerns about? What are they?*

Day 6: **What goals do I have for myself in this class, and what steps will I take to reach those goals? How will I involve others in helping me to reach these goals?**

- Desk Nametags
 - Warm-up question and introduction: Norms – students share one "rule" or norm they think is essential to a successful classroom environment.
- Reading: Sternberg, Robert J. "IQ Counts, But What Really Counts Is Successful Intelligence." NASSP Bulletin 80. 583 (Nov 1996): 18-23.
- Learning Styles Inventory <http://www.engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html>
- *Goal Setting – past successes/goals for the year, steps to reaching them, who will help, timeline*
- *Exit Slip – What I need for myself, what I need from others, what I need from the teacher.*

Day 7:

- Desk Nametags
 - Warm-up question and introduction: Expectations – one thing that has happened the way they thought it would in high school, one thing that has been a surprise.
- *Assessment – Assign portfolio, complete group essay.*

Rubric – Individual Creation

	Zero	Below Expectations – D or lower	Meets Expectations – C or B	Exceeds Expectations – B or A
Personal Facts	Not Included or entirely unacceptable	Does not include adequate information; missing facts. Does not present a complete picture of the student.	Includes all required information. Presents a complete picture of the student.	Includes all required information, and then some. Presents a more-than-complete picture of the student.
Learning Style Information		Does not include adequate information. Learning style not explained. Does not present a complete picture of the student's learning style.	Includes all required information. Learning style is explained. Presents a complete picture of the student's learning style.	Includes all required information, and then some. Learning style is explained and elaborated upon. Examples or real-world applications for this learning style might be included.
Goals		Does not include adequate information. Goals not explained. Does not present a complete picture of the student's goals.	Includes all required information. Goals are explained. Presents a complete picture of the students' goals.	Includes all required information, and then some. Goals are explained and elaborated upon. Reasons for the goals and the steps for attaining them are included.
Design		Incomplete, uninteresting, does not engage the audience's interest.	Complete, interesting, and engages the audience's interest.	Complete, interesting, and engages the audience's interest. Elicits a response. The student goes above and beyond to truly make the design personal and reflective of who he/she is.

Rubric – Group Essay

	Zero	Unacceptable F	Below Expectations D or lower	Meets Expectations C or B	Exceeds Expectations B or A
Focus	Entirely illegible or otherwise unscorable; blank responses, responses written in a foreign language, restatements of the prompt, responses that are off-topic or incoherent.	May fail to establish focus on topic/subject.	May lose or may exhibit major lapses in focus on topic/subject.	May exhibit minor lapses in focus on topic/subject.	Maintains focus on topic/subject throughout response.
Organization		Ideas/events are presented in a random fashion.	One or more major lapses in the logical progression of ideas/events is evident.	There is a logical progression of ideas/events and is reasonably complete, although minor lapses may be present.	Organization is a logical progression of ideas/events and is unified and complete.
Elaboration		Elaboration is sparse; almost no details.	Elaboration consists of general and/or undeveloped details, which may be presented in a list-like fashion.	Elaboration consists of some specific details.	Elaboration consists of specific, developed details.
Conventions		Exhibits a <u>lack of grammatical conventions</u> : sentence formation; standard usage including agreement, tense, and case; and mechanics including use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.	Exhibits <u>minimal control of grammatical conventions</u> : sentence formation; standard usage including agreement, tense, and case; and mechanics including use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.	Exhibits <u>reasonable control of grammatical conventions</u> : sentence formation; standard usage including agreement, tense, and case; and mechanics including use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.	Exhibits <u>excellent control of grammatical conventions</u> : sentence formation; standard usage including agreement, tense, and case; and mechanics including use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.